



Genesis

VOICE OF STUDENTS

What do I do now?

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Although literature on ethics is abundant, medical students and housestaff do not think they are being adequately prepared for the daily struggles they will face after they complete their training. "What do I do now?" is the first in a series of articles in *Genesis* that is devoted to breaking what, until now, has been a code of silence surrounding the most troubling issues faced by trainees at all levels as they try to balance learning medicine, performing procedures, and interacting with patients and colleagues.

In this series, we present real cases from around the world along with commentaries from experts in modern bioethics, such as medicine, law, philosophy, and health policy. The aim is not to provide "answers" but to offer readers a range of reasonable and defensible options with which to inform their own thinking and conduct. Indeed, from time to time, the commentators may disagree with one another.

Some of the forthcoming cases and commentaries are drawn from our book, *Ward Ethics*, to be published by Cambridge University Press. In all instances, cases are presented anonymously to prevent identification of individuals and institutions involved.

We invite readers to submit their own dilemmas for possible presentation and discussion to Thomasine Kushner at tkushner@aol.com. Dilemmas should be no more than 250 words and may be edited for publication.

CASE: "OMIT THE MISTAKE"

As a medical student, I observed that a patient was suffering an adverse drug reaction because he had been given an overdose of the medication. The patient was told that his discomfort was due to an allergic reaction to the medication. He was not told that an order had been written improperly. I was then instructed to write a note documenting the incident, but omitting the mistake.